

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-9 (Cancelled)

10 (New). A method of inhibiting pathogen growth on raw meat, comprising exposing raw meat to an atmosphere consisting essentially of carbon monoxide so as to cause penetration of the carbon monoxide throughout the meat, and maintaining the meat in a sealed container, wherein the carbon monoxide is maintained within the meat at the time of storage, to maintain color and freshness while retarding pathogen growth, wherein said pathogen is a facultative anaerobic bacterium selected from the group consisting of *E. coli*, *Pseudomonas fluorescens*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Clostridium perfringens* and *Salmonella typhimurium*.

11 (New). A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said meat is beef.

12 (New). A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said meat is poultry.

13 (New). A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said exposing step is accomplished so as to achieve a volume of carbon monoxide within the meat, which volume is

milliliters is from 5 to 100% of the weight in grams of the meat being treated.

14 (New). A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein said volume is approximately 30 ml for 100 grams of treated meat.

15 (New). A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein said volume of carbon monoxide contained within the meat is maintained in the meat during storage in the sealed container.

16 (New). Raw meat packed in a sealed container, which meat contains a volume of carbon monoxide in the range of from 5 to 100% of the weigh of the meat.

17 (New). The raw meat as set forth in claim 16, wherein the volume in milliliters of carbon monoxide contained within the meat is 30% of the weight in grams of the meat.

18 (New). The raw meat as set forth in claim 16, which meat is beef.

19 (New). The raw meat as set forth in claim 16, which meat is poultry.

20 (New). Raw meat packed in a sealed container, wherein said meat contains a volume of carbon monoxide in the range of from 5 to 100% of the weigh of the meat, and is produced by the method consisting of the steps:

exposing raw meat to an atmosphere consisting essentially of carbon monoxide so as to cause penetration of the carbon monoxide throughout the meat; and maintaining the meat in a sealed container, wherein the carbon monoxide is maintained within the meat at the time of storage, such that the color and freshness of said meat are maintained while retarding pathogen growth.